

No 9

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*The Advantages of a FREE People, and ill Consequences  
of LICENTIOUSNESS, consider'd,*

I N A

S E R M O N

Preached in the PARISH-CHURCH of

C R O Y D O N,

At the ASSIZES held there,

Before the HONOURABLE

Sir *THOMAS ABNET*, Knt.

One of the JUSTICES of his Majesty's Court of *Common-Pleas*

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The Address of a Free People, and its Consequences  
of Licentiousness, &c.

IN A

S E R M O N

Preached in the Parish-Church of

C R O Y D O N

At the Anniversary held there



OF THE

ST THOMAS ARNET, Knt.

One of the Justices of his Majesty's Court of Common-Pleas.

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of LICENTIOUSNESS, consider'd,*

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S E R M O N

Preached in the PARISH-CHURCH of

C R O Y D O N,

In the COUNTY of SURRY,

At the ASSIZES held there,

Before the HONOURABLE

Sir THOMAS ABNEY, Knt.

One of the Justices of his Majesty's Court of *Common-Pleas*,

O N

FRIDAY the 22d of MARCH, 1744-5.

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By L. HOWARD, D. D.

Chaplain to his Royal Highness the PRINCE of WALES.

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*Publish'd at the Request of the HIGH-SHERIFF, and the  
GENTLEMEN of the GRAND-JURY.*

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Printed by J. APPLEBEE, in *Bolt-Court, Fleet-street*;

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T. HARRIS, on *London-Bridge*; E. WITHERS, at the *Seven  
Stars* in *Fleet-street*; and J. STAGG, in *Westminster-Hall*.

The Advantages of a Free Press, and the Consequences  
of Licentiousness, compared.

# IN A SERMON

Preached in the Parish-Church of  
CROYDON.

In the County of SURREY.  
At the ASSIZES held there.

Under the Honorary

Sir THOMAS ARBNEY, Knt.

One of the Justices of his Majesty's Court of Common-Plea.

FRIDAY the 22nd of March 1744.

By I. L. D. D.  
Chaplain to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.



Printed and sold by J. HODGKINSON, in Great-Street, at the  
GENTLEMEN of the Grand-Jury.

L O N D O N :

Printed by J. ARBNEY, in Bell-Court, Fleet-Street.  
And sold by J. HODGKINSON, in Great-Street, at the  
T. HARRIS, on Ludlow-Street, R. W. HARRIS, at the  
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This SERMON,

*Publish'd at your Request,*

Is, with all Gratitude and Respect,

Dedicated by, GENTLEMEN,

*Your most obliged, and obedient Servant,*

LEONARD HOWARD.

TO  
PETER THOMPSON, Esq;  
HIGH-SHERIFF;  
Sir William Richardson, Knt.  
FOR A N;

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This SERMON

Published at your Request,

I, with all Gratitude and Reſpect,

Dedicated by, Gentleman,

your moſt obliged, and obedient ſervant,

LEONARD HOWARD.

## ACTS xxii. 28.

*And the Chief Captain answered, With a great Sum obtained I this Freedom. And Paul answered, But I was free born.*

**T**HIS Chapter discovers St. *Paul* in some of those *Perils*, which, with a Sort of Triumph, he relates to the *Corinthians*; and as *Painting* receives a Beauty from Shade, so does this great Man appear aimiable under these Clouds of Misfortune. The Bonds and Scourges which he receives under *Christ's Banner*, though Marks of Slavery, dignify the Apostle, as a Soldier's Scars in the Field of Battle, though they may disfigure the Face, recommend the Man. 'Tis Guilt alone which brings Infamy with Suffering; and what renders Men contemptible whilst they shrink at the Strokes of Justice, are the mean Actions they have stooped to, before such Punishment was inflicted.

BROUGHT up at the Feet of *Gamaliel*, we may suppose our Apostle *skill'd* in the Virtues which may be called the *Wisdom* of the Ancients; and when such Notions of Morality had received the Refinements and Improvements of the Gospel, it was highly improbable, that any thing *worthy* of *Death*, or of *Bonds*, could be committed by him. He had lived, according to the Law, blameless; and, in his Conversion to Christianity, had

*so exercised himself, as to have a Conscience void of Offence, towards God, and towards Man.*

**TERTULLUS** indeed, the subtile Orator, or Council for the *Jews*, laboured to fix some Immorality upon him; in the rough and ill-manner'd Terms of *pestilent Fellow*, and the like, reproached him before *Felix*; but not being able *to prove the Things whereof he accused him*, his Oratory, though prefac'd with Flattery to the Governor, was unprevailing. From which Part of *St. Paul's* Narrative, succeeding Orators, or Advocates, may take a useful Hint, to avoid what disgraced the shining Parts and Abilities of *Tertullus*, the strong Invectives and Indecency of Expression, which he made use of against the Apostle. Every Thing abusive and insulting, before that Sentence is past which fixes Guilt upon the Party, is underbred and inhuman; is cruel to a Fellow-Creature under the Distress of Confinement and Suspicion, and very disrespectful to, and unbecoming a Court, or Place of Justice; where Mercy and Compassion likewise preside, and receive Offence from Barbarity and Ill-Nature.

FROM a View of *St. Paul*, thus blameless and inoffensive, the Number of his Enemies seems very extraordinary, and such Popular Rage and Inveteracy, most strange and astonishing. But in his Days, as in ours, to go about to reform, was to displease the World. He had the Cause of the Gospel, and the Welfare of Mankind, greatly at Heart: He saw their Infelicity in the Darkness of Ignorance and Error, and took great Pains to enlighten the Minds of the *Jews*, with the Knowledge of that *Day-Spring from on high, which had visited his People*: But they still continued in the Disposition our Saviour complains of, and loved *Darkness rather than Light*.

THOUGH

THOUGH the Day is so chearful a Part of Time, and all Nature is enlivened by the comfortable Rays of its bright *Ruler*, yet there are Persons who choose *Night*, the Darkness and Secresy whereof favour their evil Enterprises. In that Iniquity, which may aptly be called the *Undress* of Human Nature, the *Light* of the Gospel was too exposing. They liked the Interpretations of the Law by their Rabbies and Teachers: The pure Tenets of Christianity laid too strong an Embargo upon their vicious Inclinations. A Shew of Sanctity and Devotion, which did not interfere with their secret Practices of Evil, they could very well bear with; but St. *Paul's* Doctrines were too searching and purifying; in the Propagation whereof we perceived the Sanhedrim enraged, and the People, *its Dupes*, clamourous and tumultuous: For doing the Duties of his Ministerial Office, we find him treated like a common Slave and Malefactor, examined by *Scourging*, and bound with Thongs. In which Circumstance he endeavours to throw off the *Vipers* which fastened upon him, and pleads his *Roman* Privilege to avoid these Stripes and Indignities.

SELF-PRESERVATION is a Law of Nature, countenanced by our Saviour's own Example and Precept: He *secretly conveyed*<sup>a</sup> himself from the Danger of popular Rage and Fury; and in another Place, ordered his Disciples, *if they persecuted them in one City, to flee into another*<sup>b</sup>. We carry about with us a frail Body of Flesh, affected with the Acuteness of Pain, and may therefore take all honest Means to avoid Suffering. Prudence is the Guardian-Virtue of Man, who is not, like the Horse, to rush into any Battle, without an immediate Call or Necessity. We are not to court Danger for the Character and Congratulation of Bravery. The Work of St. *Paul's* Ministry was not yet finished,

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<sup>a</sup> *John* viii. 59.<sup>b</sup> *Mat.* x. 23.

and till it was expedient for him to drink the bitter Cup of Martyrdom, which he afterwards chearfully did, it was natural for him, and not at all criminal, to take all justifiable Methods for his own Defence and Preservation.

HE was of *Tarsus*, the Metropolis of *Celicia*, whose Natives enjoyed the same Immunities and Privileges with the Citizens of *Rome*; to know himself posselt of such a valuable and national Liberty, and to be treated and bound like a Slave; to receive Scourges from no judicial Sentence, nor proper Hand of Authority, this stirred up all the noble Passions and Affections of his great Soul, roused up all the *Roman* and Freeman within him, *Is it lawful for you*, says he, *to scourge a Roman, and uncondemned?*

AT these startling Words the *Centurion* gave a Caution to the chief Captain, to take Heed what he did, for this Man was a *Roman*. Upon which he interrogates *St. Paul* upon that Subject, and acquaints him with the Value of the *Liberty* he pleaded, that with a great Sum he had obtained such Freedom: But the Apostle boasted of his superior to such purchas'd Freedom, that what Money (which in a corrupt Age might gain Honours for the most Undeserving) had procured for him, was his Birthright, *Paul* greatly answered, *But I was FREE-BORN.*

FROM which Text, intimating to us the early Worth and Esteem of *Liberty*, and what sacred Things a Peoples Rights were in former Ages, I am persuaded, as important as your present Time is, you'll favour me with some Attention upon the noble and warming Subject of *Liberty*, whilst I consider, in the *First Place*, the Advantages of a free People, and the Excellency of our Constitution in these Kingdoms.

Secondly,

*Secondly*, I shall distinguish *Liberty* from that *Licentiousness* which is the Bane of all Peace and Order. And,

*Lastly*, Draw some practical Conclusions from the foregoing Considerations, applicable to the solemn Occasion of our present Meeting.

And *First*, Of all Earthly Possessions, *Liberty* is the sweetest: 'Tis what the Lyon, as much as his Food, roars for in the Den that detains him: 'Tis what the caged Bird flies about in pursuit of, and beats itself against the Wires, the little *Grates* of its Prison. As Man is a more exalted Part of the Creation, his Notions of Liberty must be higher, and his Sense of the Loss of it still more affecting; if we were fed with the greatest Dainties, treated with all the Pomp of Servants and Retinue, in the most stately and magnificent Mansion, yet there is a natural Aversion to Confinement which would make us uneasy; our roving Thoughts would take their Flight in quest of our darling Liberty, the Walls which were our Bounds, though even at some Distance, we should view with Anxiety, and though built with the *Jasper* and *Onyx* Stones, should long to scale them.

THERE is not so moving a Sight as a *shackled* People; though a Country affords the most delightful Prospects, is surrounded with Gardens and Vineyards, and its Territories large and extensive, yet if its Inhabitants are *Slaves*, have no Rights nor Liberties independant of Power; if the Will of their Prince is all their Tenure, and he can demand their Persons and Possessions as his Humour, or the Exigency of his Affairs require, the whole Country is but a wide Prison, the People Prisoners at large, *Keepers* perhaps for a Term, but not *Owners* of their Lands and Possessions.

To know the Value of Liberty, is to feel the Pains of Slavery, as a torturing Disease proves the Blessing of Health. The Advantages of a free People are legible in every Country under the galling Yoke of arbitrary Government. Much has been said of the Happiness of some People where the Monarch is absolute, and which I would not dispute, if an *Angel* was to reign ; but must think it doubtful, where the Prince is in a Natural State of Fallibility, and there is no National Law and Check upon his Conduct. Where the Will of the Monarch is absolute, the Lives and Fortunes of the People must be insecure and uncertain.

To turn our Eyes on a Country near us, is to see no Rights, either *Religious* or *Civil*, which can be strictly called the Peoples. The Impositions of their Priests, how inconsonant soever with Scripture or Reason, must be the Faith and Religion of the People. No free Exercise thereof is to be tolerated or suffered, and *Conscience* must have have no Voice nor Dictate. As to *Civil Rights*, they hang by a slender Thread, where the Government is arbitrary : Where the People are unconcerned in the making and repealing of Laws, they will naturally bend to the Controul of Power. How happily different is a Peoples Case, whose own Hands have a part in making the Laws which bind them ; who must *grant*, before any part of their Property can be *demanded* ; who are garrison'd by their Constitution against the Oppression of Power, and can sit down, without Disturbance or Molestation, under the Vines and the Fig-Trees which their Ancestors, or their own Industry have planted.

THIS being, in part, a Description ; leads me in the next place to shew, the Excellency of our *Constitution*, our Happiness in this Country of *Liberty*,

erty, where to any Invader of our Rights, any Insulter of our Persons, though grac'd with all the *Titles* which *Heralds* can give, or *Power* which *Monarchs* and *Kingdoms* can confer, we have the Plea of the Apostle, and can say with him, that *we are free born*.

'Tis the Voice of Law, no Threat of Man above us, that an *Englishman* must hearken to. In this Country, *aliud est obedire, aliud servire*, The Obedience or Subjection of an *Englishman*, is not the *Service* of a *Slave*. Government is obeyed, not from its own Will and Superiority, but the *Law* which constitutes it. If by the Blessing of God on our Endeavours, by the Favour of his bounteous Providence, our *Lot is fallen into a fair Ground*, and we have a goodly *Heritage*, 'tis fenced by Law against Trespass or Invasion. Property is the apt Term of a *British* Possession.

As we are to be subject to Government, so Government itself is also subject to the Law, which protects the meanest Person under it from any Wrong or Injury. The Peasant's Plea is as valid as the Princes, and equally regarded by our Constitution. The Subject has his Remedy against the King himself, who is undistinguished in the Distribution of Justice. *Magistrates* are Persons placed betwixt the Sovereign and People, to preserve and defend the Rights of both. In the Terms of Scripture they are *Shields* in our Land, to secure and relieve the Injured and Oppressed. Courts of Judicature rise in Degrees of Eminence and Jurisdiction, where we have Liberty to resort and remove our Complaint, if we think ourselves aggrieved by any Sentence or Opinion.

THE Complaint of the Prophet cannot be made in our Streets, *That we are like Fishes of the Sea which have no Ruler*. The Great cannot devour the Less without the Controul of Laws. Some, indeed, because highly born, and of large Fortune, may think that they are made like  
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the *Leviathan* in the Waters, not only to take their *Pastime*, but that *Part* of it, like his, is to consist in pursuing and making a Prey of their lesser and weaker Species; but *British* Courts of Justice often, to their Cost, convince them of that Error, and relieve the poorest from their Assaults and Over-bearing. Under the Titles of *Custodes Libertatis*, Magistrates are distinguished: Whether in a Cottage or Court, we are *born free*; and with Decency to Place and Station, can demand, and have a Right to Justice, against the most powerful Adversary.

If the Ballances of Justice were not to hang even; if it should ever be denied or delayed for any personal Respects, our Great \* Original Right would be infringed. All have an equal Access to it, in an impartial Distribution whereof, such as our Constitution requires, and our Magistrates observe, our Benches of Justice appear in the lovely Dress of Scripture, *in a Righteousness which cloaths them, and with a Judgment, which is as a Robe and a Diadem.*

POWER by our Constitution appears in its proper Light, not form'd for the Oppression, but Service of Mankind; and as we can't be good Men, without being good Subjects, so no Power can make any Man truly Great, if he is not tenacious of the *Liberties* of those under it. And as our Temporal, so our Spiritual Welfare is provided for by our Laws and Constitution; if faithfully executed, they carry a proper and keen Edge against those who neglect the public Worship of God: They are the Guardians of his Honour and Glory, restraining all Blasphemy and Profaneness, the too notorious and wanton Use of his Great Name, *in whom we live, and move, and have our Being, The Holy One that inhabiteth Eternity, with whom are the Issues of Life and Death.*

\* Nulli negavimus, nulli differemus justitiam.

To conclude: The *Servitude* of Sin is the greatest we experience; and though there is such a seeming Aversion to *Slavery*, yet Men are not ashamed of being *Slaves* to their Vices. In other Respects we are *free* as we can wish or Desire: No Man of Power, can with Impunity hurt us, nor *remove our Land-mark*. Every Thing that has the Aspect of Slavery, derived from any Law or Authority, is only calculated to restrain the Abuse of Liberty; to punish those, whose *Freedom* and *Enlargement* endanger our Persons and Properties, and render our Streets unsafe and unpassable. As long as a Man keeps himself honest, he keeps himself from the Badges of Slavery. No Fetters disgrace any *Englishman*, till he has first disgraced his own Nature, and departed from the Humanity thereof. Even when the Sword of Justice strikes, the *Man* is recollected in the *Criminal*; and none of the Tortures of other Countries are perceivable, which make Punishments shocking, and give the Face of Death an additional Terror.

Thus have I endeavoured, though in *weak and faint Colours*, to give you the *Picture* of a *British* Constitution, which, if a *Likeness* is preserved, cannot displease, though masterly Strokes are wanting. Those before me, who may not have had Leisure nor Opportunity to examine into, and consider these Things, may see what an excellent Form of Government they have the Happiness to live under. To be less *limited* than we are, would be to have the Order and Decency of Things inverted, and a wild Irregularity and Confusion prevail against the proper Discipline and necessary Restraint of Authority. What we have most to fear, is from the excessive Indulgence of our Passions; from those *Luxuries* and *vicious Habits* which, more than any *Burdens* of State, are likely to hurt us and impoverish Posterity, to weaken and enervate

the Courage and Force of *Britain*. It is a very antient and just Remark, that with *standing Walls*, and *sinking Morals*, a Nation may be in great Danger. But it is to be hoped, that since we have a Constitution which preserves, we shall lend no Hand ourselves to the Destruction of our Native Rights and Liberties. They are worth maintaining, nor has any Blood nor Treasure been spared by our Great Ancestors, to transmit them to their Descendants.

THE noble Struggle for *Liberty* at the glorious Revolution, when there were all the Attempts to enslave us which the Arts of Jesuits and Priests could invent, will always be memoriz'd to the Praise of *British* Courage and Resolution; will cause a fresh springing Odour to arise from the Urns of that great Hero who undertook and accomplished it, of the brave and injured People who joined and assisted. They who, safe on the Shore, can see the Dangers they have escaped, and can embark in any Schemes which may favour the Designs of the same Enemies to our Religion and Freedom, and expose us again to such a Storm of State, cannot have the Welfare of their Country at Heart, nor a real Value for that Liberty they pretend so much Zeal for. They who for any Considerations, in any Views of Interest, or to gratify their Ambition, could ever consent to part with *one jot or Tittle* of *English* Law and Liberty, suffer the least Diminution of our Rights and Privileges, and wickedly join to fetter Posterity; such would give a Stain to their Characters, which no Acquisitions could wipe off, nor Time deface; would entail a Reproach upon their innocent Off-spring, who would wear the shameful Badges of their Baseness and Corruption. What can warm the Breast of the free-born *Briton* like *Liberty*? But in our Notions thereof, and Zeal to defend it, we should be careful that  
such

such Zeal does not burst its Orb, nor rise to such a Height as to overset the Vessel, which a moderate Gale of, carries along safely and pleasantly.

AND this brings me, *Secondly*, to distinguish *Liberty* from that *Licentiousness*, so unhappily visible, and which, unrestrained, would be the Bane and Destruction of all Peace and Order.

A late Writer has very justly observed, that there is an infinite Fund of *Enthusiasm* in the Composition of Human Nature, which operates *variously* on *various* Objects; the chief Mischief whereof is in Religion and Civil Polity. With regard to the *one*, it has given the Appearance of Absurdity to what is in itself a most *reasonable* Service: It has destroyed the Relations, disturbed the Harmony, and overturned the Foundations of Society. As to the *latter*, it has raised Clamours and *Oppositions*, embroiled Kingdoms, subverted Constitutions, and so disordered the Heads and Minds of many well-meaning Persons, as to lead them into *Rebellion*; it has carried them beyond the Bounds of Reason and Truth, which in Politicks, as in every Thing else, should guide and direct us. *Liberty* has its proper Limits, and may degenerate into a *Licentiousness* as fatal as Oppression. Liberty may be so falsely stated, and injudiciously propagated, as to produce many unbecoming Invectives, and indecent Treatment of Government. Under the Notion of a *free Country*, what improper Liberties have been taken with Administrations, or indeed with any Body else, which such *licentious* Men have been pleased to be *free* with. They that would give up the Liberties of a People, and they that would alienate their Affections from Government, and lead them into Riots and Seditions, are joint Confederates in the Ruin of their Country. From

an unrestrained Licentiousness, a Wantonness of the Freedom of Speech, and an Abuse of the valuable Liberty of the Press, all that is dear to us may be endangered. *Licentiousness* is a Fire of State, kindled with combustible Matter, and which breaking out from the *lowest* Rooms, threaten the Destruction of the whole Building.

MISFORTUNES of State, like those of private Families, are sometimes unavoidable. We are all Passengers in a Vessel, against which Seas may beat, and Waves run high; but they who at such Times, instead of lending an helping Hand, should introduce Disputes and Confusion, fly at the Person at the Helm, (taking all the Care he can) would subject the Lives and Safeties of all to great Hazard. 'Tis no Friendship to any Country, to make the Service of Government uneasy to those who take it upon them, and by raising Uneasiness and Party-Divisions, to prevent the Success of its Labours. A very learned Writer informs us, that in evil Speeches against the Rulers of a People, there is great Danger of the Breach of that Command, which enjoins us not to bear false Witness. And another observes, that under the Ninth Commandment this <sup>d</sup> Caution not to calumniate or defame, is included. In honouring our Father and our Mother, the divine Law has enjoined a proper Respect to Governors, who as common Parents, ordained for a more comprehensive Benefit and extensive Good, have a Right, as well as Natural ones, to our Duty and Subjection. The unbounded Licentiousness which prevails amongst us, is the greatest Infelicity of the Times, Virtue and Modesty receive Offence from many Instances of it; the Principles and Morals of the Age are corrupted, and the *King of Kings*, as well as earthly Power, treated with a shameful Indignity. In all which abuse of Liberty, we act against the Duty we owe to God and

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<sup>d</sup> το μη συκοφαντῆν. Phil. de Decal. p. 768.

to our Country, expose ourselves to his Wrath and Indignation, and to the just Resentment of those, who are *ordained of God for the Punishment of evil Doers, as for the Praise of them that do well.*

It remains, therefore, that we justly distinguish in the Affair before us, that we respect our Liberty, but *not use it for a Cloak of Maliciousness*; that in the Enjoyment thereof we *study to be quiet, and to do our own Business*; not taking upon us to judge and condemn our Rulers, from every Wind of Report raised by those *who lye in wait to deceive*, but keeping within our proper Sphere and Province, leave the Management of State to those whose Capacity best qualify them for the Care thereof. The Peace and well-ordering of Society falling under the Care of the Civil Magistrate, give his Person and Character a Right to our Regard and Respect, remembering the *Royal Fountain* whence, under God, his Authority derives. From our Esteem of Liberty, thus distinguished from Licentiousness, a loyal Affection and Attachment will naturally flow to that *illustrious Family*, which God, in his *providential* Regard to the Religion and Liberties of this Country, has placed over us.

In every Instance then of Duty and Subjection, it becomes us to shew our Sense of the Blessing of Liberty, and to endeavour to make Government as easy to his *Majesty*, as he is careful it should be to us; whose strict Notion of, and Regard to Honour, Stedfastness to his public Engagements, and personal Courage and Resolution to perform them, give a Weight and Credit to the Alliance of *Britain*; who is great likewise in Proportion to his Concern for *Liberty*; who appears throughout *Europe*, the great Friend and Lover thereof; whose Sword is drawn in the glorious Cause, turning its Point against those who would make Tributary Provinces of Kingdoms, and who have  
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often *arm'd* and *aim'd* to enslave us. And as Religion and Loyalty are joined together by God, let us never put them asunder. In honouring our King let us not forget our Duty to that Supreme Being, by whom his *Throne is established, by whom Kings reign, and Princes decree Justice*; who must go out with our Fleets and Armies to make them victorious; *who is a Refuge from the Storm and from the Heat, the Hope of Israel, and Saviour of Men in Time of Need.* The Word *Patriot* is in every Mouth, I hope it will produce that real *Patriotism* which is in the Power of all, from the highest to the lowest; a Practice of that *Righteousness which exalteth a Nation.* The Great *Constantine* remarked, that those who were false to their *God*, were to be suspected by their *King*. Let us pray then, that for the Security of Government, and Welfare of our Country, *Christian Principles*, those Pillars of Loyalty and Subjection, may always continue to be reckoned amongst the necessary Qualifications for Post and Confidence. Good Examples in high Life cannot fail of their Influence, and from such *Fountains* those clear *Streams* of Piety and Religion will run through all Degrees of Men, as will bring a general Odium and Contempt upon Prophaneness and Infidelity.

MAY those in the low Class of Life, whose Province is Labour, become an honest and industrious Poor, which will make them valuable Members of the Community. May we all recollect, in the *Misfortunes* which now call us to *this Place*, the sad Effects of Pride and Idleness, the Fraud and Injustice which, as in the Gospel Instance, proceed from being *asham'd to ask*, and *not caring to dig* for Support. May the moving Sight of Iniquity which now presents itself, prevail on us to bring our Children up *in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*;

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in the pliable State of Infancy to bend them into that Shape of Virtue, which it becomes a Man, and especially a Christian, to appear in. Nothing can be a greater Grief to a virtuous and affectionate Parent, than to see his Hopes in his Children blasted in the *Spring* of Life, and fine Parts and Abilities shaded with vicious Habits and Inclinations. Let it be our Instruction then to young Persons, to avoid the Mode and Fashion of Wickedness; and, by an early Piety and Virtue, to become Ornaments of the Age, as opening *Buds* and *Blossoms* are of the terrestrial Nature. So will no Chains of offended Justice ever disgrace them, their own Hearts reproach them, nor their Country condemn them.

LET the *Wrong* and *Robbery* now to be tried, put every one upon recollecting those secret and evil Practices, which have not the public Shame of Detection in this World, but will be manifest and punished at the Great Tribunal of God. Let all those, whose Fortune and Condition lift up above the Commission of *petty Villainies*, examine themselves whether they are free from every Species of Injustice. He that robs a Family of its Peace, in any lewd Invasion upon the Honour and Virtue thereof, is as great a Criminal in the Sight of God, and all virtuous Men, as the *little arraigned Malefactor*. Any Breach of *public Faith* discovers as bad a Heart, as in the mean dishonest Servant, whose *Breach of Trust* brings him to a public Bar of Justice. Every Breach of *Promise* is a Species of Fraud, whereby a Man is deceived into such a Confidence and Reliance upon another, as very often make him neglect other Means of Subsistence.

IN every State and Condition of Life let us strictly adhere to Honour and Integrity. Though placed above, so as not to think ourselves much affected with, the Censures  
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of the World, yet let us seek the Reputation of Virtue, and know, that it is what most of all dignifies Superiors. As well as Modes of Dress and Fashions, let them give becoming *Habits* of the *Mind* for Inferiors to imitate. Let them be just to the *Dependencies*, which for some Reason or other, they create, and not encrease the Misfortunes of the Neccessitous, by a fruitless *Attendance* and Expectation of Favour. Let Politeness and Elegance of Conversation, an Easiness and Affability of Deportment, have the additional Lustre of *Sincerity*, and let us despise all the Ornaments and Grandeur of a Place where *Truth* is a Stranger. Let us all seek for those Joys which are permanent and lasting, and plant those *Seeds* of Virtue here, which will rise up hereafter into never-fading *Flowers* of Bliss, growing and blooming continually in Christ's heavenly Kingdom. As there will be a Time when we shall stand in need of the Comforts of Reflection, when all our past Pleasures will prove our greatest Torments, if they have prevented our *Peace at the last*, let us purchase, by Good Works, the Refreshments and Satisfaction which a religious and virtuous Man will receive at those dreadful Periods of Time, the *Hour of Death*, and the *Day of Judgment*. Let us do nothing to wound our Consciences, and make us afraid of *ourselves*, but by persevering in Piety and Virtue, engage those on our Side, whose Notice and Acquaintance are worth cultivating, who are only qualified for *Friends*, and can reach the glorious Character; who with regard to the Friendships they form, are not *given to Change*; who are neither governed by *Humour*, nor mislead by *false Insinuations*, but whose Conduct bears a Resemblance to His Constancy, who having <sup>e</sup> *lov'd his own, i. e. his Friends, lov'd them to the End.*

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THE Time, which now presses me to conclude, will not suffer me to enumerate all the Pleasures, both here and hereafter, of a virtuous and inoffensive Behaviour, which, in a Word, will make us sleep in Peace, enjoy Prosperity, and bear Adversity: For the Tears of Affliction fall with a peculiar Grace from the Face of Innocence, and produce the Exercise of many Christian Virtues, as soft Showers of Rain forward the Growth of many lovely Plants and Flowers. I shall no longer interrupt the *public Business*, but discharge you from the *Courts* of the Lord's House, to attend *those* of Earthly Power and Authority; permit me to do it in the Words of Scripture, *Thus saith the Lord, O House of David, execute Judgment, and deliver him that is spoiled out of the Hands of the Oppressor. Set that God always before you, who in the midst of Judgment remembers Mercy, and defends the Earth as it were with a Shield.*

F I N I S.



